goin' at it this way. Who's this chap that's promotin' the scheme? Reverend —Reverend What?"

"Fosdyke," his wife supplied.

"No, that ain't it—that ain't all of it." He picked up his newspaper and made a hurried search of its columns. "Rev. P. Martyne Fosdyke! Who's he? He's a new one on me. He don't belong in town, does he? What's he come here to start a girls' home for? I'll bet I know why. So would you if you'd stop to think about it. P. Martyne Fosdyke! I'll bet the name his folks gave him was Peter Martin. Why don't he use it that way? It's because he's a fraud. If it was me I wouldn't give the Rev. P. Martyne Fosdyke as much as a plugged nickel. I wish to glory you hadn't put your name down 'Mrs. S. Jerome Webster.' I don't like bein' stuck in the same class with Rev. P. Martyne Fosdyke."

His wife smiled as her mind conjured a picture of the dapper Fosdyke and compared it with Sam. She was silent for a little time. When she spoke, it was not in direct reply to what Sam had said.

"SAM, I do wish you could begin to look at things differently. You're so stubborn, some ways. It's not quite fair. You're a rich man. Being a rich man ought to mean more than just having a lot of money."

Sam's eyes narrowed.

"What's the trouble? I've been givin' pretty near all that everybody's been askin' for."

"Yes," she returned. "You're generous enough that way, with other people; but you're almost stingy with yourself, and with—with us too, in a way. Your being rich ought to mean a lot of chances for the children, and for us too. Things have changed in town, Sam, and you haven't changed. You haven't grown with the town; you haven't even grown the way your own business has grown. It seems as if you stopped growing yourself when you got out of debt in the old shop and began to get ahead. Sam, you could be a big man in town if you wanted to."

"I reckon I'm doin' my share," he persisted dully. "There ain't many things I don't give to as much as anybody, even them that's got more."

"That isn't what I mean," she said, with her first sign of impatience. "You don't seem to know that the town has a social life now, and that you ought to take a part in it. I don't believe you know that it isn't enough nowadays to go over and sit on a neighbor's porch in the evening in your shirt-sleeves, the way you used to do. Sharpston isn't a village now."

Sam grimaced and shook his head.

"Dollin' up in the evenin's? Is that the kind of thing you're gettin' at? Not for me! When I ain't got any friends left that I can visit with in my shirt-sleeves if I want to, then I'll stay home. When I grew up to the place where I could feel easy and right, there's where I had the sense to stop. I ain't goin' to change any more. When it comes to changin', you've changed a plenty for both of us. Mrs. S. Jerome Webster!" He spoke the name without derision but with a grim sort of humor. "Mrs. S. Jerome Webster givin' away five hundred dollars at a clip and gettin' her name in the paper for patronizin' charity! That's a sight of change since the time when you and me didn't know but what we might be needin' charity for ourselves if we didn't pull through with things at the shop."

He pushed back his chair and stood up, giving himself a shake to settle his clothing.

"No! You go ahead this way, if it tickles you. I ain't goin' to fuss with you about it. But I'm goin' to stay the way I be."

"Even if you know it hinders the children?" she asked quickly.

Sam's manner was not quite so smooth-tempered. He scowled and his lips tightened.

"Hinders 'em?" he echoed. "How do you mean?"

"That's what I've been wanting to say," she returned. "I've never had the courage to be plain about it with you. Yes, I mean you're hindering the children by being so—so—"

Her courage stopped at the final word; but Sam supplied it:

"So common. You might as well say it all while you're sayin' it. I know there's plenty of folks that thinks about me that way. Well, that's right. It don't hurt me to say I'm common. But I ain't so common this way as I would be if I tried to cover it up by puttin' on dog. A fool's the commonest kind of man on earth. How would it be helpin' the children any if I let folks see they had a fool for a father? I hate shammin'."

"It needn't be a sham, if you were able to grow," she began; but Sam stopped her with a gesture.

"I've got my growth. If you ain't, why, you just keep right on growin'. That'll be all right with me. As for hinderin' the children—" He checked himself suddenly. "Shucks, Molly!"

He walked slowly round the table and stood at his wife's side.

"If you and me had had things fixed for us like this when we was their age, we wouldn't have thought we was bein' hindered. Don't you get anxious. If Tom's got the ambition to amount to more than his dad, I ain't goin' to hinder him by bein' the way I am. If he ain't got it in him, it won't help him for me to be puttin' on frills. You quit your frettin'."

HE could not put the matter out of his own mind so easily. It persisted when he left the house and walked to his work. He did not think about it deliberately, as about a problem that must be solved. He was not irritated or angered. Rather, his wife's suggestion had made a gray atmosphere for his thoughts as he went through town to the works.

He felt better when he turned the last corner and came within sight of the massed, smoke-grimed buildings with their towering chimneys and the ten-foot-high metal-lettered sign: "Sam'l J. Webster Iron Works." Always that picture stiffened his shoulders and squared his chin. The main buildings covered a full block of ground, with an overflow of lesser shops and warehouses across the railroad's switch-track. There before him lay the thing he had fought for and accomplished. He could not feel depression, face to face with it.

His son Tom was at the broad desk which they two shared between them, working with the morning's mail. Tom was the living image of old Sam brought up to the minute and compounded with youth. He looked up and nodded.

"Hello! I was just going to ring you up. We've copped the S. & M. contract at our price. Signed, sealed, and delivered!"

THAT was good news. Sam sat down to enjoy it, tipping back in his swivel-chair, bringing a cigar from his pocket.

"Bully!" he said. "Good work, son! I'd have bet on your gettin' it. Ten thousand, clean cash profit, six weeks from now. Makes you feel fine, don't it?" He chuckled. "Mighty! I guess I know! If I live to be a thousand, I ain't goin' to forget the feelin' of my first contract, away back yonder in the little shop. It took a month of hand-forgin', with me swingin' a hammer with the best of 'em, and it cleaned up three hundred dollars. Three hundred for a whole month, with three hands on the job! But I certainly did need the three hundred then. And that was the first step the shop had ever been able to take away from odd piecework. That was the beginnin'. Ten thousand clean, usin' only one corner of the works for six weeks! That's growin' some, son!"

Tom smiled in sympathy; then his lips compressed and he sat erect, with a manner his father had.

"Dad, there might just as well be another five thousand of profit in this job for us. We could make it easy if the works were on another footing."

"Well," old Sam said, "I wouldn't wonder if we could go over the ten thousand some. We do need some remodelin' in the foundry, if we're goin' to tackle much of the big steel work. But we ain't quite got to that yet, son. A few more ten thousands first!"

"I don't mean remodeling the plant," Tom said. "That can wait a while. I'm talking about the men. We're in worse shape there than in equipment—farther behind, I mean. The whole force needs a shake-up, from top to bottom."

"Does it?" Old Sam's eyes glinted, though his tone was level. "It's a pretty good crew. It's took a good while to build that crew up to where it is."

"That's it exactly!" Tom said. "It's taken a good while. That means that some of the men may have been here too long. They've dropped behind. The works ought to be modern, dad—as modern as we can make 'em."

Sam took his time for answering that, rolling his cigar.

"There's nobody that's been here any longer than me," he said presently.

Tom laughed. The laugh was meant to imply pleasant things; but the old man did not show pleasure.

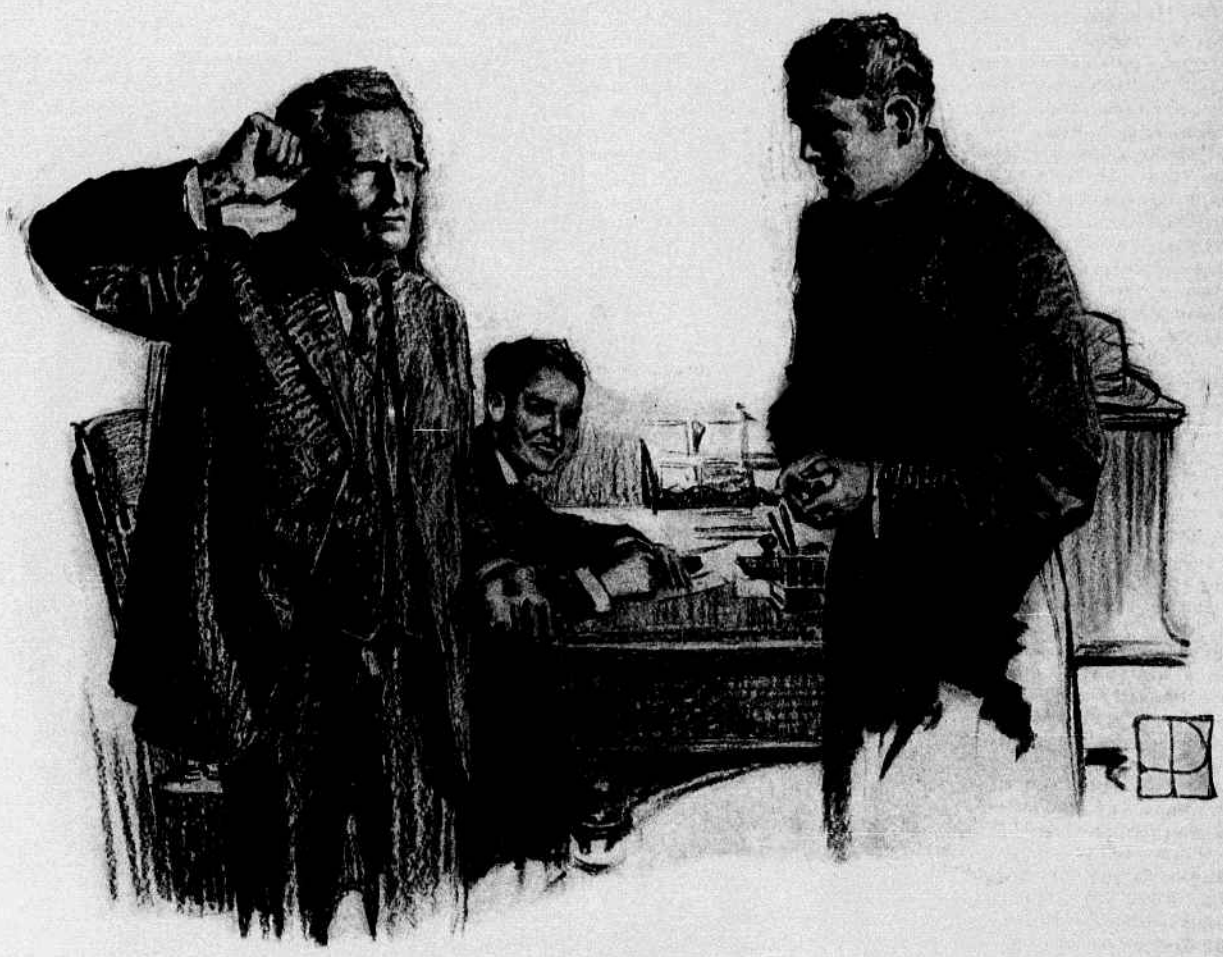
"The hands, they come and go. They ain't always up to mark, mebbe. But the heads are the fellows I'm talkin' about. Most of them have been growin' up with the business, years and years. They know it as well as I do."

"Do they?" Tom queried. "Perhaps they know it; but they can't *do* it. There isn't a department that's having modern management. Those heads have been trained to their trades; they're good enough workmen. But they don't know that there is such a thing as scientific management. Efficiency is a word that's been born since their day."

"Yeh?" Old Sam's tone was listless, as it was wont to be when he was thinking deepest. "Name one of the heads that ain't a good man for his job."

A NAME came to Tom's lips, but hung unspoken. The owner of the name entered from the humming shops beyond—old Eddie Brady, the foundry foreman. There could be no doubt that he was old; his age was the plainer in that it had shriveled and dimmed him instead of plumping him out. Zest had faded from his eyes; his leathery cheeks were collapsed over jaws with most of the teeth gone; his twisted hands had lost their certainty. Sure enough, Eddie was old.

He shuffled to Sam's desk, put down some smeared papers, and went shuffling back to his work. There was no greeting. The eyes of father and son followed him



"Old Sam tore Fosdyke's card in two and dropped the pieces. 'You don't get a cent of my money,' said he, 'till there are some men backin' your scheme.'"